REFLEXIONS

UPON THE

CONTROVERSY

About the

Oath of Allegiance,

Occasion'd by the

LETTER

In ANSWER to

English Loyalty.

LONDON,

Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, at the *Judges-Head*, in *Chancery-Lane*; and *James Kade*, at the *Cock* and *Sugar-Loaf*, in *Fleet-Street*, 1682.

THE PREFACE.

'TIs a wise Preamble, and like to recommend what follows much, to confess at first, that I am going to Write, sounds even to my own Ears little better, than I am going to play the Fool. And yet what can one hope from scribling, in an Age, wherein if two Cart Load of Pamphlets could have made one Convert, we had been all of one mind in England before this. People will buy a Pamphlet, because it is cheap, and Read it because they have nothing else to do: But what they thought before, they will think still, let the Pamphlet say what it can. What I think true is true, is the Rule; and does he say as I say, as much the Touchstone of Truth, as does he like my Play, of Wit. Should Truth her self come among us, she would hazard her Reputation, unless she came Tongue-ty'd. He whom she contradicted, would go neer to take her for a Jilt. For all that, whether Fool, or no Fool, is as the Reader pleases. I need not wear yellow, if any body will be the wiser for what I Write. If every Body be Obstinate to make no profit by any Book, of all Mankind

they ſpend their Time the worſt, who learn to Read. Since at worſt 'tis a Folly A-la-mode, *I will truſt the* Readers *good Nature for once, and be in at the* Oath *of Allegiance. 'Tis a game, as much as lyes upon it, in my Opinion ill play'd, whether the fault be in the Game or Gameſters. One may be fond of ſport, more Sollicitous to play than win; or a Game may be croſs, and which will be play'd no better. However it be, at the rate it now goes, the Lookers-on are not like to know in haſt what becomes of their Bets. My concern in them has made a Pamphlet of the thoughts, which much Reflection on many inſtances has produc't, and the Anſwerer of* Eng' [illegible]oyalty Reviv'd. *I am far from meaning t[illegible] him; but cannot avoid bringing my inſtanc[illegible] would have any thing mended, muſt needs [illegible]t and why I make bold with his, ſince I muſt [illegible]omebodies, becauſe they are the moſt freſh and at hand, and the laſt puff ſtill calls out the Flame. To do this will, in ſpite of my Teeth, look like an Anſwer to ſo much. But yet my buſineſs is with the Voucher, not the Adverſary, and I ſhall give him cauſe to believe, I am not the mercileſs Enemy, call'd an Anſwerer, who ſpares nothing.*

TO begin then: I wiſh thoſe who write, would order it ſo, that ſome Body may be the better, beſides the *Stationer*. For methinks an *Author* is, or ſhould be ſomething more, than barely an Implement to the *Printing*-Trade. Children were not ſet to School, with deſign to make no other Uſe of their Learning. I know not who is like to be the better, for being cloy'd with the ſame Stories over and over again, not a jot mended in the telling, and but little vary'd, and which every Body knows as well as the Teller. I cannot but grieve to ſee, this is the Caſe of moſt Anti-Allegiance-Writings. The Briefs, and Councils are all you ſhall generally find any where. They are all the Subſtance of this Letter, ſave an Argument with never a true Propoſition in it, about the word *Treaſons*. Are theſe any Secrets? Have they not been urged, and canvaſt, and turn'd all manner of ways, almoſt theſe fourſcore Years, all, ſave the laſt, which is indeed, I think, of a later Invention, but no Secret neither. Yet after all, People think as they do; and can it be imagined, that who was not moved by hearing them Yeſterday, ſhall, by hearing them to Day, it may be worſe told? Indeed, he who will pretend, there has not been ſo much need of them as they will bear, and that he can make more, ſays ſomething: But he who barely ſays them over again, either ſays nothing, or would have done better if he had.

Again, has the other Side nothing to ſay for themſelves? Has not *Withrington*, have not others anſwered, and that to the Satisfaction of Men of Conſcience and Judgment? I am ſure, he had the Reputation of both, few of his time being eſteemed more for Learning; and One who having ſpent all his Life in Forreign Parts, had no concern in our Quarrels, ſaid in my hearing, That *Withrington* had downright baffled two of the moſt Famous among all his Adverſaries. Why, muſt all be diſſembled, the ordinary *Objections* repeated as confidently, as if nothing were to be replyed, and no notice taken of any anſwer? People may carry it as they will; any Face may be ſet on any thing. But who will be medling in thoſe matters, ſhould do

well to remember, that Face will not always do it.

Here is an *Oath* in the Caſe, an *Oath* which concerns our Duty to *God* and *Cæſar*; in which, if any be miſguided, he is anſwerable to him, who miſguides him. Tis not, or ſhould not be, here as at the Bar, where a bad Cauſe too often finds an Advocate; one who whatever he thinks, ſpeaks for his Client. People expect other dealing from thoſe who undertake to guide their Conſciences; that they be truly Conſcientious themſelves, and who will not for Fear nor Favour, nor any Reſpect, make things better nor worſe, nor other than juſt they are. Alas! How ill does he anſwer their Expectation who ſhews them but one ſide of the Medal? As much like Silver as it looks on that ſide, it may be arrant Braſs; and he finds it ſo, who views it always. Of all counterfeit Coyn, counterfeit Truth is the worſt, and the moſt damageable Cheat. It may purchaſe Credit and Applauſe: Right is not to be had, but for Truth. As it is of pernicious Conſequence to be in the wrong in this Matter, let nothing be conceal'd, which conduces to judge whether we be or no. Let us not be poſſeſſ with a vain Confidence of one Title. There is another ſet up: Let us fairly know what is in it. Let us have no cauſe to ſuſpect, there is more concern that we ſhould deal, than deal ſecurely; more concern for the Side, than the Truth. Both Sides lay claim to Her: Who truly deſires the Cauſe ſhould be right judged, will tell us what the *Defendant* ſays as well as the *Plaintiff*. A Guide of Conſcience ſhould deſire nothing elſe. To be ſollicitous only, that it may go on one ſide, is more for another Calling.

In plain *Engliſh*, Theſe half Lights are ſuſpicious things; twenty to one, there are Bracks and Stains, where we muſt not ſee whether there be or no.

And yet I would this were all, or the worſt. Stubborn, ill-natur'd Arguments, which will not civilly be turn'd off, are, to ſay truth, very Incommodious Duns. We ſhould have ſome Indulgence, when People ſhift out of the way, or make as if they ſaw them not. 'Tis ſomething leſs faulty, to conceal what others ſay, than to ſay our ſelves what is not true; or, if we will ſet up for Maſters, what is weak. For a weak Argument, is a ſigne of an ignorant Maſter, and 'tis unexcuſable to pretend to teach what we underſtand not our ſelves. Too many Examples occur of both, but too often. To confine my ſelf to my *Letter*; It is made up of Invectives, and Arguments; and there is not a jot of Strength in the One, nor Truth in the Other.

The

The *Invectives*, becauſe they are ſtrong at leaſt, ſhall go firſt. Much pains he takes, and many words he ſpends, to make his Adverſaries ill thought of; as at a Deſign ſo charitable, who would ſtick out for pains? But yet, they are not the ill Men, he would have them paſs for. Indeed they never ſet up for impeccable, that I know; nor ever thought the *Oath* an Antidote againſt Humane Frailty. This does draw ſome of them, as well as others, even from their Religion; and he knows 'tis *This*, not the *Oath*, which does it. He meets of thoſe who take it, at Maſs ſtill, and ſees them ſtand to their Religion, as conſtantly as their Neighbour-Refuſers.

For the reſt, theſe Allegiance-Men, as luck is, live not in Deſerts; they are to be found in the World, intermingled in the ſame Towns, ſometimes the ſame Houſes, with People of their own and other Religions, who know them, and their Dealings. Let theſe be ask't, Whether they deſerve the Black Character of this *Letter?*

But if he live not out of the World himſelf, with *Ideas* fram'd wholly by Gueſs, and unexperienc't Fancy; if he knows Men and Manners, 'tis ſtrange if he be not acquainted with ſome of theſe People, whom he himſelf takes for honeſt Men, good Chriſtians, good Subjects, and good Friends, and whom, upon occaſion, he would truſt as ſoon as other Folks, and as far. I will venture my Money, that this is ſo; and for all his big words, put it to his own Conſcience. But whether he think well or ill of them, I doubt he has ſomething to anſwer for. If ill, for having a bad Opinion of his Neighbour, who deſerves it not: If well, for wronging them much, and his Conſcience more, againſt which he ſpeaks.

Then for his *Arguments:* I am ſtrongly perſwaded, there is not One, which he himſelf thinks will bear the Touch. He begins with One borrowed from the *Third Treatiſe*; which, as we have not always the care we ſhould of what we borrow, is the worſe for coming into his Hands. *If the Supream Paſtor* (ſays he) *is at any time to be obey'd, 'tis then when he commands in things appertaining to Faith and Salvation. But* Popes *have declared the Oath contains Matters contrary to Faith and Salvation.* Theſe two, perhaps, are not ſo well coupled; One making for *Obedience*, and the Other *Belief*. Bare Obedience, in matters of Faith and Salvation, may poſſibly be more queſtionable, than others. Becauſe, where they are not concern'd, an unjuſt Command ought often to be obey'd; whereas no Command can oblige to the prejudice of Faith and Salvation. But as this will return again, I deſire only to know at preſent, Whether

he thinks in his Conſcience, that 'tis all one, to be contrary to Faith and Salvation, and to be declared to be ſo? Every Body, that has common Senſe, every Body out of *Bedlam* knows, Things may be declared otherwiſe than they are, unleſs the Declarer be infallible. And this, indeed, he ſeems well content the *Reader* ſhould believe of the *Pope*; for he gives him Magnificent Words. But I gueſs, by his falling preſently off, he believes it not himſelf. However, he may take his Choyce. If he do not believe ſo, he ſpeaks nothing to purpoſe; and muſt needs know, he does not. If he do, he does worſe; for he brings in a new, and that uncertain Rule of Faith, and which leaves the Security of Salvation to the Mercy of a probable Opinion, if it be One. 'Tis much better to be talking nothing to purpoſe.

Then he tells *W. H. That the* Pope, *and a General Council are infallible, and have practiſed the Depoſing Doctrine; and therefore, if that be erroneous, the Church is not Infallible.* Does he in earneſt believe this follows? Does he think the Churches Infallibility extends to Practiſes, other than what are warranted by Deſcent from *Chriſt?* Does not he, and all Chriſtians know, the Promiſe of his Aſſiſtance was made with the Commiſſion he gave, to teach what he had commanded, and that there is no Warrant to extend it farther? Do not we ſee, that Practiſes, even of Councils, have ſometimes other Grounds, Diſcourſes, and Speculations, not always neceſſarily true? If the *Pope*, and a General Council ſhould happen to err in ſuch things, why muſt the Church therefore forfeit her Infallibility? Time was, when the Biſhops of one Nation thought they might oblige their Prince, to lay his Crown at their Feet, and actually did. In all likelihood, the Biſhops of other Nations thought their Power no leſs; and if they had met in a General Council, would have thought it lawful for all to do, what ſome had done. Does this *Gentleman*, for all that, think their Opinion true, or the Church the leſs Infallible, becauſe it is not?

Next, he keeps a Pother with *Appealing*, as he calls it, from the *Pope* to the *Doctors of Sorbon.* And he may uſe a Metaphor when he pleaſes; but, becauſe he had it ſo often up, 'tis not amiſs to obſerve by the way, that *Appealing* here ſignifies, barely asking the *Doctors* their Opinions. Does he, in earneſt, think this ſo ſtrange a thing? Does he think there ever was, or perhaps ever will be a Conteſt with the *Pope*, in which Divines have not, or will not be conſulted? Or, does he think there muſt never be any Conteſt with him; but all he commands, without more ado, be preſently done, and all he ſays believed?

lieved? For if there may be a doubt, whether in this, or that Case, People are obliged to believe or obey, he cannot think it so heinous a Matter to desire to satisfy that Doubt. If he know a better, or more unoffensive way, than to inquire, what unconcerned Men, good *Catholicks*, and good Schollers think on't, we are the less obliged to him, for making a Secret of it. Had he spoke in time, the mighty Mischief of saying to a private Man, *Pray Sir what think you*, might have been prevented. Indeed, if he will endure no Contest, no Doubt in any Case, (which he seems, as if he would fain be at, but speaks not out, for fear no Body should endure him) his Discourse is not inconsequent. 'Tis only abominably false, and abominably pernicious. In short, he may think he speaks Sense, if he can think with his Learned Quotations to make the *Pope* Infallible, and Deposing Doctrine a necessary Point of Faith. But 'tis but a moderate Glory, for which I would not betray the Church and Religion if I were as he.

For his following Mirth, much good may it do him, and may it be hearty. For I have known People Laugh outwardly, who have been ill enough at ease within. Where lies the Ridiculous, and the Sham? *Why, these Wise* Doctors, *when time was, subscrib'd to the Deposing of* Henry *the Third.* As if it were not possible to pack an University, as well as a Jury; and as if it were not actually pack't at that Time, by the Power of the League. At least, so they say, who should best know, the *French* themselves. But be as it will, He does not, sure, think the worse of the Subscribers for being of another Mind, than the Leaguers. *I but* Grandin, *and his Fellow Readers Subscribed not, and this makes most believe a Sham Subscription, or Sham Doctors.* Is he in earnest trow, or does he jest on still? For methinks, 'tis pleasant enough to offer to perswade us that this Subscription is a Sham, and that by an Argument which bids fair to perswade us 'tis not. For what should hinder a Shammer from shamming in *Grandin*, as well as the rest? What should make him balk the Credit of a Chair, if there were no more in it, than to put in what Names he Pleased? But does our Author believe one word of what he says? Does he truly think most Men, or any Men believes they did not Subscribe, whose Names we see; or are not what they pass for, *Doctors*? Why *Grandin* would not make one in so good Company, this *Gentleman*, if he would so fain know, may ask *Grandin* himself. If he think it was, because *Grandin* and the Subscribers are of different Sentiments in this Matter, he would

do

do well to get ſo much under *Grandins* hand. For I have been told, neither *He*, nor *any*, to whom the buſineſs was propoſed, ſtuck out for that Reaſon. But every Body does not think himſelf obliged to ſay all he thinks true, at all times. 'Tis more a wonder, that the Love of barren Truth, which yields no Profit, ſhould prevail on ſo many, as did Subſcribe, then that ſome ſhould think fit to think of ſomething beſides.

But now he falls on with this potent Syllogiſm. *If they who call themſelves Catholicks, have not faithfully obſerv'd every Material Point in the Oath, then are they perjur'd; but they have not obſerv'd every material Point: Ergo.* As I have not heard People are obliged under Perjury, to ſpend their whole Stock of Obſervation upon Oaths, I ſhould think this *Gentleman* might lawfully have kept ſome in reſerve, to beſtow upon his Arguments. A very little would have ſhewn him, that nothing he ſays is true. 'Tis not true, that his Adverſaries have not obſerv'd every Material Point, and 'tis not true, that they are perjured, though they had not. Some other Sin, if it pleaſes him, inſtead of Perjury, Raſhneſs, or Negligence, in the Concerns of the Soul, or what other Name the Caſe will bear; but no Perjury, till ſomething be ſworn, which the Swearer knows, or at leaſt doubts is falſe. The Conſcience muſt be violated, as well as Truth, by Perjury. Want of Fidelity, in making Obſervations, where one is not conſcious of it, is ſomething another thing. But 'tis not true, that the *Oath*-Men are guilty even of ſo much. They do obſerve, and conſider his Material Point, in complement to thoſe who put it in their Heads. For though it had never come there, I know not why it ſhould be thought, that any thing material was left unobſerved. The *Oath* has been faithfully enough obſerved, and critically ſcan'd almoſt theſe Eighty Years. The Laws, and all manner of Treaſons known; yet this Point in all this time, was never thought worth mentioning. Becauſe ſome Body lately, either more lucky, or of more talent in finding Faults, has bethought himſelf to make a matter of it; muſt we, and our dull Anceſtors, be Perjured, only for not being cunning in quick?

The thing has indeed no difficulty, to any who will reflect that different things have often the ſame Names. *You Swear*, (ſays the Material Objection) *to Diſcover all Treaſons: Receiving Orders from* Rome, *is Treaſon by Law, and therefore are Perjur'd, if you diſcover not that among the reſt.* One might as well argue he were Perjured, who having ſworn to bring into a Camp or Town, all the Horſes, he could

could light upon, ſhould leave behind the Horſes on which waſh-Maids dry their wet Linnen. Treaſon by Law, may be far enough from Treaſon in reality; And who will be content to grant me one modeſt requeſt, to mend not only the ſound of words, but take their ſenſe along with him, will find in this Caſe it actually is ſo. For what does *Treaſon* by Law ſignify? Is it, that the Nature or notion of *Treaſon* is indeed found in receiving Orders from *Rome*, becauſe the Law calls it *Treaſon*? Unleſs this be, there is barely the Name not the thing of *Treaſon*. Every thing has its Nature, which where it is not found, there is not that thing but another, with the ſame Name perhaps. So *Treaſon* is what it is; where that *What* is not, there is not *Treaſon*, nor can be, neither by the Power of Law, nor any thing elſe. Omnipotence it ſelf cannot make things be What they are not. There remains then nothing that I ſee, for *Treaſon* by Law to ſignify, but that the Law puniſhes thoſe who receive Orders from *Rome*, as it does Traytors. So it often explains it ſelf in this, and other Caſes, of mere Legal *Treaſon*; ſaying, *They ſhall ſuffer, as in Caſe of Treaſon*, or be reputed, or deemed, or adjudged *Traytors*, or the like. And if at any time it ſpeak otherwiſe, it muſt alſo be ſo underſtood. For there is no Difference, ſave in ſound, betwixt theſe two Expreſſions, *This is, or ſhall be Treaſon*; And, *This ſhall be puniſht as Treaſon*. Whether the Law uſe the One, or the Other, what is meant can be no more than what is done. And the Law never does, nor can do any more, towards making *Treaſon*, what is not ſo of it ſelf, but forbidding it under the ſame Penalty, and ſo giving or occaſioning the ſame Name. Now *puniſhable as Treaſon*, and *Treaſon*, having two very different Notions, a wonderful Material Obſervation it is, that they have both the ſame Name, and a mighty ſtrong Argument to prove they are Perjured, who Swear to diſcover all *Treaſons*, that they diſcover not quite another thing.

If this were not ſo, *Dun* I can tell you, would be in the Mire as well as *Ball*. If the Swearer be Perjur'd, becauſe he does not diſcover Prieſts, all that you, who Swear not, get by it, is, that you are a bad Man with another Name. For why do not you diſcover them, if they be indeed *Traytors*? Will a Yea, and Nay-Conſcience, which allows not a Man to take the *Oath*, allow him to conceal a *Traytor*? 'Tis a pleaſant Conſcience this of yours, if it perſwade you that diſpenſing with one duty, giving the Prince ſecurity of Allegiance, is a ſufficient ground to diſpence with another, and ſuffering *Traytors* to go undiſcovered in his Dominions. You have no great mind,

if

if one may gueſs by your writing, to have the *Oath-men* paſs for better Subjects then you; but yet you bid fair for it, if you would have it thought, they only are obliged to diſcover all *Treaſons*, and you not. Swearing or not Swearing alters not the Caſe. Prieſts are, or are not *Traytors*, whether we Swear or no. You who ſay they are in vertue of the Law, muſt ſay too, That you are obliged to diſcover them. The Swearer, if you will, is more obliged, but to no more than you. For he is but obliged to diſcover all *Treaſons*, and that he was before he Swore, and had been, though the Oath had never been thought of; and you are obliged to as much, unleſs you think the Law of Nature, and of *God*, beſides the Law of the Land, oblige not without an Oath. For all this Obligation, there is nothing without Swearing. In ſhort, if Prieſts be not Traytors, there is nothing to be ſaid to the Swearers; if they be, there is nothing to be ſaid for the not Swearers. That nothing can make a Traytor of an honeſt Man, whether he will or no, is all the excuſe of both; If that will not do, both are errant Knaves for ought I ſee, and differ only as Knight and Gentleman; one is a Sir Knave, a Villain with a Title, a Perjur'd Villain; the other but plain Knave, a Villain of low Degree, but a Villain too.

And yet after all, 'tis true, that there is ſomething Material in this Obſervation; ſo Material, that he was too blame, not to make a Secret of it, and keep it by all means from *Proteſtants*. For if they once get it by the end, and come to underſtand that *Prieſts* are *Traytors*, and to be diſcovered under pain of Perjury, what will become of poor *Prieſts*? *Proteſtants* all take the Oath, and ſome know of *Prieſts*, and ſay nothing, but have no mind, I ſuppoſe, to be damn'd for their ſakes. For a ſmall matter, Miſpriſion of *Treaſon*, or ſo, *Prieſts* may count upon it. Who would refuſe to venture Body and Goods for them, in a Country where they are ſo loved? But Perjury too! why 'tis too much in all reaſon, One cannot fairly expect it. Your *Informer*, if this Doctrine be true, is the only honeſt Man of the Nation. Every Body, that knows of a *Prieſt* muſt out of pure Conſcience ſet up of the Trade.

The material Trifle deſerves not ſo many words; yet now we are in, let us e'en ſee the laſt on't. A great abſurdity the Author thinks it is, to ſay, That what is *enacted* by the Law to be *Treaſon*, is no *Treaſon*. To ſay, *Legal Treaſon* is not *Legal Treaſon*, were indeed ſomething abſurd. But may not a Man be in his Wits, who thinks *Legal Treaſon*, and *Real Treaſon*, go not always together? Do none but

ſenſe-

senseless Oath-men, think a *Priest* may be an honest Man, and the State run no extraordinary hazard, though he be never caught? *Treason* signifies a Crime, by which the Weal-publick is betray'd, and it signifies every thing punishable, with the punishment of that Crime. Is it any such Riddle, that the same thing should be *Treason* in One Sense, and not *Treason* in the Other? But this is Equivocation, he says, and double Perjury. Equivocation is indeed Perjury in Oaths, as it is Lying in Speech. But if he will needs take a word Equivocally, must we therefore be Perjured? Let every one bear his one Burthen, if he please. We understand the word *Treason* in the first, which we take to be the proper Sense, because we see, that all Mankind, as soon as they hear of a Traytor, unless Circumstances suggest something else, have presently a horrid *Idea* in their Thoughts; something notably against the common Good either committed, or attempted; something abominably bad in it self, and which would be the same execrable Crime it is, though there were no Law about it. As *Parricide* was *Parracide*, and every jot as bad, where the Law forgot or forbore to appoint it any punishment, as any where else. He would have us understand every thing which the Law calls by the same Name, and punishes with the same punishment. As if punishment made or marr'd, or were any thing to the notion of the Crime punish't. *Robbery* and *Murther* are punisht alike, by our Law; yet they are very different things; and who should Swear to Discover One of them, would not be perjur'd by concealing the Other. And for the same Names, unless the same Notions go along with them, they leave the things as different as they were before. At this rate, one may possibly be a very honest Man, and an errant Traytor, at the same time. So *Christians* were all Traytors, or as bad, under the *Heathens*; and are still, it may be, both under *Heathens* and *Mahometans*. In a word, his Notion is wholly Forreign, grounded on nothing found within the thing, but derived from something done about it from without, common Name and Punishment. And because we are a little dull, and apprehend not how the proper Notion of a thing should consist in external Considerations, sometimes applicable, and sometimes not; but fancy wildly, that things have proper Natures and Notions of their own, which remains the same whatever is done about them, we are Equivocators and Perjurers.

Lastly, He dares be bound, the *Judges* shall give it for him. Truly, for his Bond, he must pardon us. Those are often most forward to be bound, who have least to pay.

When we know what ſtock he has of Law, we will talk further. A Bond in a matter of knowledge, in which one has no skill, is like a Bond in a Mony-matter from one who has no Caſh. Will he be bound, where he is a reſponſable Man? Bound to acquieſce in the deciſion of the Judges? bound to take the Oath, if they give it againſt him? For elſe, to trouble them to no purpoſe, is a Preſumption of which I dare not be guilty; nor does he care what they determine, nor is this the thing which ſticks with him. But if he be in earneſt, and will put it to reference, with all my heart. I'le not be out at any motion which promiſes an end of the quarrel. Let's leave diſputing from this moment, and apply our ſelves to the Judges. If their Goodneſs, which refuſes no pains to end differences, will undertake the trouble, I engage for my ſelf, and think I may for my Friends, to ſtand to their award, every jot as readily if it go againſt, as *with* me. For I am not fond of the Oath, though I love Allegiance. An End any way contents me. I am pretty confident though there is more of raſh then ſtout in his daring. The Oath does not ſay, abſolutely all Treaſons, but all Treaſons againſt the King. All Treaſons are not ſuch. It is Treaſon to kill the Chancellor, or ſome other Great Officers, it is Treaſon to Counterfeit his Coyn. The Law I ſuppoſe does not underſtand theſe to be Treaſons againſt the *King*. Joyn Opportunity to Treaſon againſt him, and it is incompatible with his ſafety. He has been ſafe in the hands of a *Prieſt*, one who yet lives, and whom when the wiſdom of the Nation thought fit to diſtinguiſh from his fellows, they took him not I ſuppoſe for one who meant any harm to the *King*. There is a particular Statute to puniſh concealment of *Prieſts*, of which ſome have felt the ſmart: I never heard of one Indicted for Perjury on that account. All Men cry out a Traytor, as Fire in the Streets, upon the firſt appearance. He would be little better then a Traytor himſelf who ſhould not. *Proteſtants* are not *Heathens* nor *Atheiſts*, but Men who know, what 'tis to forſwear themſelves. Divers know, or think they know, where there is a *Prieſt* and ſay nothing. No body for all that thinks them leſs honeſt Men then Informers, or leſs ſollicitous of the *King's* ſafety, or more indulgent to any Treaſon againſt him. I think then I have reaſon not to diſtruſt a Tryal of this matter. One more, to ſay the Truth, I have, which in wary dealing perhaps I ſhould not tell him, leaſt he ſhould fly back from his reference. But becauſe he ſhall not ſay he was ſurprized, I will acquaint him, that I have taken his advice, and askt as he deſired I ſhould. And

I am

I am told that the words *all Treasons* in the Oath, are to be understood of real Common-Law-Treasons, such as are indeed dangerous to the *King*, and reach not Nominal, and merely Statute-Treasons, and that this sense of the Oath is most evident. But yet as he may possibly distrust my word, and though I know I say true, chuse whether he will believe me, I pretend not to conclude him by it. He is still free to go on with his reference if he think fit. One thing I am sure of, that hitherto there is no Perjury, no, though it should be as he says. Because who took the *Oath*, Swear uprightly according to their Conscience, understanding by Treasons true, not made Treasons, and believing the *Oath* meant so; and I am confident there will be none hereafter, and that when it appears the Oath obliges *Catholicks* to deliver their *Priests* up to punishment, for no other fault then Priest-hood, none will take it more. And so I beg the Readers Pardon for detaining him so long on a Subject, which as material as this Gentleman makes it, I doubt after all is but much ado about nothing.

Scripture and Councils must be in too, else all had been marr'd. For what's an Author without a Quotation? without something to shew Reading, as the *Kings* of *Brainford* spoke *French* to shew breeding? otherwise sure there needed no Councils to make Men confess, there has been such a thing in the World, as a Sentence of *Deposition*, and that *Sacro præsente Concilio* too, in one, and but one Case. And there needed no Scripture, to perswade People that the *Pope* is as good a Man, as the High Priest was among the *Jews*, and has as much vertue in his Lips. For this is what he concludes from the *One*, and undertakes to prove by the *Other*. And yet, who can tell whether he had not a mind, his *Reader* should take *Deposing Doctrine*, for an Article of very Faith? For that People presently look for, when they hear of Scripture, and General Councils. One cannot easily judge, as he carries it, much as if he said, I will not tell you what I think my self; but would be glad, you would think it a Point of Faith. And Faith indeed made the great noise, at first, against the *Oath*; but who continues it still, have thought better of it since, and found it convenient to quit that Pretence, and say, 'tis not *Faith*. He, I suppose, for the credit of the common Cause, does not mean to fall out with his fellows, and say it is. For which reason, I forbear to say what the Occasion suggests, and as I take no Joy in discovering Faults, am well content that many I find here scape for me unreproved and unobserved. Where Faith is not concern'd, I con-

ceive it beſt to let Scripture and Councils alone.

And as for the Oath, the Sport I think is at the beſt. We have ſeen either all, or the beſt he can, or at leaſt thought fit to do. 'Tis not amiſs now to caſt an Eye upon what he performs againſt the Oathmen. *He does not find* (he ſays) *in all the Breves, that the* Pope, *either aſſerts his depoſing Power, or commands any to aſſert it:* All he requires, is a Civil *Obedience from his Children in Spiritual Matters*, things *appertaining to Faith and Salvation.* Now, *if they will deny Obedience and Allegiance (in ſuch matters) to their Supreme Paſtor*; He *cannot ſee, how poſſibly Princes* can expect, *or long hope for a Civil Obedience from ſuch Subjects.* And this is the only ground of all the Unkindneſs, with which he confutes his Adverſaries.

As I am ſomething dull, I take not the jeſt. He, no doubt, can give an Account, how Obedience to a Spiritual Superior in Spiritual Matters is civil Obedience; how Subjects come to owe Allegiance to any, but their own Prince, what 'tis to purpoſe, whether the Depoſing Power be aſſerted in theſe *Breves*, if it be aſſerted elſewhere, and if we may believe him, in ſomething ſtronger than a *Breve*; and what, beſides not looking for it, hindred him from finding in the *Breves*, what others of his ſide have found; who tell us, the Denyal of Depoſing Power is one of the many things aſſerted to be repugnant to Faith and Salvation. Which they make account is aſſerting the Power, as indeed it looks very like it. It might have gratify'd ſome Bodies Curioſity too I ſuppoſe, to have let them know, what he would have done, if he had found the Depoſing Power aſſerted or commanded, in theſe *Breves*; or will do, when he finds it in another, *if a Breve* be ſo material; obey, or Diſobey? If Diſobey others may hope his good leave to diſobey a *Breve*, who would take it himſelf. If Obey, he thinks the Depoſing Doctrine true, whether found in a *Breve* or no: For he would not, I preſume, aſſert an Untruth for any Body's ſake. He had e'ne as good declare himſelf, and aſſert it now. A Day or two ſooner or later neither makes, nor marrs; and 'tis but a uſeleſs Nicety, to ſtand upon it.

But of theſe, and the like matters, he may bethink himſelf at leiſure. 'Twill be time enough to make up his Accounts, when ſome Body calls for them. I concern my ſelf only in his Jealouſy of theſe, who take the *Oath*, and the ground he has to ſuſpect them of Infidelity to their Prince. 'Tis, I ſuppoſe, becauſe who diſobeys one Superior, are like to diſobey another. Yes truely, very like, in alike Age. Not to diſſemble what is, there is no counting upon Obedience

from

from the Oathmen, whenſoever, and by whomſoever they are commanded, what they cannot with a ſafe Conſcience obey. They have the grief to diſobey the *King*, and his Laws once a Month; and once in their Lives, the *Pope* too: And cannot help it, while they are perſwaded, *God* is to be prefer'd before Man, and that *He* requires they ſhould do as they do. If they make bad uſe of a good Principle, and diſobey where they ought to obey, there is ſomething to be ſaid to them: But if they do but what they ought, what he ſays is, in effect, they are guided by Conſcience, and therefore not to be truſted; True to God, and therefore like not to be true to their Prince. Shew, if you pleaſe, that they do ill, in diſobeying the *Breves*, before you run away with it into your long Carrier of angry *Rhetorick*. *They Diſobey* (ſay you) *their Supreme Paſtor, Chriſts Vicegerent; Him whom* God *himſelf hath Commanded to Feed his Sheep, to Feed his Lambs*, and to *have care of his Souls*. As if plain *Pope* were not as much as all this. They do diſobey him, that's agreed. Why, is that diſobedience blameable? And *They diſobey* (ſay you) *in things appertaining to Faith and Salvation*. And what then? If it be not too unmannerly to ask a Queſtion, where I know before hand there is no anſwer. But pray, which are theſe things, and where may we find them; in the *Oath*, or the *Breves*? In the *Breves* is only the Command, which is diſobey'd. And they tell us too, that theſe matters are contain'd in the *Oath*. There we find Depoſing Power deny'd, and Allegiance profeſt. Theſe then are the matters in which the *Pope* is diſobey'd. Pray, how come theſe to be Matters of Faith and Salvation? The Depoſing Power indeed pretended as long as it could. But now even they, who oppoſe the *Oath*, have thought good it ſhould pretend no longer. The other has reaſon to pretend, nothing in the Law of *God* being more expreſs, then Duty to Princes. But no Body is unjuſt enough to imagine, the *Breves* ever thought of forbidding this Duty. It would be to forbid, what *God* commands; in which caſe he were no good Chriſtian, who ſhould doubt whom to obey. One may be ſubtle, in diſtinguiſhing betwixt *Performance* and *Profeſſion*; ſay the latter is forbid, though the former be not. But this will have no pretence to a matter of Faith and Salvation. A wild Fancy it muſt needs be, into which it can enter, that the Law of *God* has left the Profeſſion of Civil Allegiance in the Breaſt of Spiritual Power. And ſo moſt evidently, for what concerns Allegiance, what can be ſaid to be matter of Faith and Salvation, is not forbid; what can be ſaid to

be forbid, is not matter of Faith and Salvation. But this is but losing time for Methods sake. The *Breves* never meant to forbid Allegiance, or the Profession of it. Accidentally indeed they hinder the Profession which is in the *Oath*, because it is joyn'd with something, which they thought fit not to let pass, renouncing the Deposing Power. In truth, all rests upon *That*, and *That* being at last acknowledged to be no matter of Faith and Salvation, there remains no pretence for Disobedience in such matters.

Though there did, there is something more to be thought of. For what if such a Matter should happen to be determin'd wrong? What if we should be commanded to take Vice for Virtue, and Virtue for Vice. Must we, because these are Matters appertaining to Faith and Salvation, obey, and try to go to Heaven by the way of Vice? Must we learn a new Christianity? For the Old one teaches, that Virtue only leads thither, and Vice somewhither else. But let us understand one another. You who say, I must obey, because the matter appertains to Faith and Salvation, pray what do we mean? That the Matter commanded was revealed by *Christ*, and I must believe so, and testify my belief by my Obedience? Or, that provided I obey, I may believe what I will? If you take it this latter way, I am beholding to your Indulgence for the liberty of setting my outward and inward Man together by the Ears, and making my Actions bely my thoughts. For where Faith is pretended for a Command, Obedience to it is, whatever I think in my Heart, a Profession that the Pretence is true. But your kindness will do me no good. Because, if the matter be revealed by *Christ*, I must needs believe it; and must not receive it into my Faith, if it be not revealed. I am obliged both ways, and 'tis not your leave which can discharge me. Besides that, how you can at the same time pretend a matter appertains to Faith, and allow every Body to believe it does not, is a Riddle which poses me. But if you will have my Belief go along with my Obedience, pray shew me why I must *believe*, before you tell me I must *obey*. For, you know, I must not entertain a wrong Faith for any Bodies sake, no not for an Angel of Heaven. Apply this to our Case. The *Oath* is forbid, because it contrives matters repugnant to Faith and Salvation; and this Prohibition, say you, I must obey, because it is in a matter appertaining to them. But if I obey, and believe the Repugnance mentioned, how shall I answer for that Belief? For making my self a Faith of my own, and receiving into my *Creed* what neither I can find *Christ* ever revealed, nor any

Body

Body elſe can ſhew me, be it ſaid with the good leave of the *Catechiſt*. If I believe it not, how ſhall I anſwer for my Obedience? For owning by it, that a matter appertains to Faith, which I believe does not? For perſwading others, as far as my Example will perſwade, to believe what I believe not my ſelf? Is it a ſlight matter to have a hand in confirming a wrong Faith in the World? Will your word bear me out? Pray permit me to think it is not here, as where we may, and ought obey; and at the ſame time below the Command perhaps unprofitable, perhaps prejudicial. Faith requires inward Aſſent, as well as outward Submiſſion; make Faith the ground of a Command, I cannot ſee but that who believes there is a Faith to ground the Command, and yet obeys it, betrays Faith, and becomes a Scandal to his Neighbour, whom he temps to believe *Gods* Law is other then it is, at leaſt in his Judgment. And this, I ſuppoſe, they ſaw, who have attempted to make the *Pope* Infallible: He needs Infallibility no more than other Men, to oblige to a Conſcientious Obedience; where right or wrong Obedience is due, as it often is, to all Superiors, though we think, and though we know the Command harmful. The Superior is to provide againſt that harm, when it appears to him, as well as other Folks, and his Subjects, to leave that care to him, and obey him. But every Subject is anſwerable for an Errour in Faith, as well as his Superior; every Body muſt look to his own Soul. And therefore, ſince Obedience to a Command concerning Faith, draws in Belief, either the Superior muſt be exempted from Miſtake, or the Subject from Obedience, when there is one. *Bellarmin* goes the firſt way; this *Gentleman* may follow him, if he pleaſes; and when he has made out that Point, urge Obedience freely. We, who believe, there is no Power, which can oblige us to believe amiſs, take the Second, ſomething the more confidently for his Argument. For what he brings, is not true, and if it were, ought to make us the more wary.

So much harſh Deſcant upon ſuch a ground! The *King* and *Council* importun'd with Suggeſtions of cauſeleſs Jealouſy, for this! The *Oath-men* for this traduc'd, for men whom *No Oaths will choke, who would ſtretch their Conſcience to ſwear, for Worldly Intereſt; either what they know not, or what they believe not; and who, he is inclin'd to believe, break their Vows and Oaths, with as little concern, as you would a Ruſh!* Papiſts *in Maſquerade! a kind of* Janus-*Fac't Monſters! Men who like* Eſau, *will ſell the Bleſſing of Heaven for a Diſh of Pottage; and thunder out* God Dammes, *and what you will, to ſave their Bacon! Men,*

who

who are ashamed of their Religion, and its Principles! Glory more in the Name than Thing! pawn their Faith, sell their Consciences and Religion, betray the God of Eternal Truth and Life; *and what know I?* And this Passion upon no more occasion, from a side nicely tender in this Point, and against which, if any thing come forth less smooth, or less kind; any thing, short of Love-letter; What Crys presently, what Peals of Uncharitable and Unchristian Ringing in our Ears? And yet, 'twere something, if he thought any of all this true. But he knows all this while, and sees with his Eyes, They save no Bacon, nor get no Pottage, nor have so much as a Prospect of Worldly Interest. Process for 20*s.* a Month, or 2 Thirds goes out against them, as well as others. I would it did not. Perhaps they might be good Christians then, very Conscientious Men, and of good Examples, and some Authority too, it may be. He knows too, they are not ashamed of their Religion, or its Principles; but are now again, in some Places, at the Mercy of their Old Sequestrators, for owning it. 'Tis the Deposing Principles, of which they are ashamed, and to see them pin'd upon Religion. This they see, with shame and Grief; but they blush not in this Case, for their own Faults. They sell not their Religion, or Conscience; nor can, while there is no Price paid. Some Wit in his Anger would have scrapt out this Objection, and put him in mind, that to part with a thing for nothing, is not to sell it.

If he be indeed inclin'd to believe, they would break their Oaths so slightly, his Inclinations are worse than I can in Charity believe; though they are bad enough, if they have no ground but what he mentions; his Storm, and the *Oath of Supremacy*. People act not, but upon occasion; if he will call the Occasion they had to take the *Oath*, a *Storm*, must his Metaphor needs incline him to believe, they have no regard to an *Oath*? If he would do any thing towards allaying his Storm, 'twere more colourable to fancy some Relation between them; but as it is, his inclinations must e'ne trust to our Charity, for ought I see. Then the *Oath of Supremacy*, what business has that here? Or does he forget what he is talking of? When he is to tell us of Breaking of *Oaths*, does he tell us of taking them? In short, his Inclinations are absolutely groundless, and what they would carry him to believe absolutely false, for the *Oath-men* have that regard to *Oaths*, which the awe of Divinity requires! They do not strain their Consciences, nor do any of the ill things he mentions; and so, for all his Inclinations to the contrary, I verily think, he believes himself. As

these

these are heavy Imputations, and which would stir even a patient Man, what if one should be revengful now? Does he think there is nothing to be retorted? Nothing in the Deposing Principles, which would furnish Matter to talk of the bad Subject, and the bad Conscience? He might chance to repent his Provocation, and find his Friends, who disown his Zeal, have reason. For no Jest bites like the true one; as he found by experience, who being askt, What ail'd him to be in such a mighty Passion? *Why*, (reply'd he) *Yonders a Fellow has prefer'd a Charge of Villany against me; and the mischief is, the Rogue has proved it.* But, as I find it much more sweet to benefit, then shame a Man, I only pray him for his own sake, to do better another time, and either forbear to speak ill of other Folks, or at least say nothing but what he has some colour for, and what he thinks is true: And, if he be not too much to request at once, to acknowledge his Adversaries are not altogether the wicked Men, his *Idea* makes them, who can put up Injuries calmly; and so he is quit for me.

The *King* and *Council* are, methinks, or should be, above the Level of a Pamphlet. 'Twere good, in my Opinion, and no more than becomes the Respect due to them, to talk of something else. He may be one, for ought I can tell, that know him not, who may take upon him, and knows what he does, when he makes bold with them at every turn; and undertakes to instruct them, of whom they shall think well or ill. For us, I think 'tis but our Duty, to keep a greater distance; yet not to dissemble a just Ambition, we are, I confess, deeply Ambitious of their good Opinion; and make our Court, as we understand it, who come not there to learn. Live quietly, and privately, give them no trouble, if we can help it; and appear not before *Them*, till we are sent for: Which, if ever we be, I hope we shall have a wiser Story to tell, than to teach them, who are their Friends, and their Foes; and that they must beware of those, who Swear to be true to the *King*, who will sure enough stand by the *Pope* against Him in a Field, because they stand by Him, against the *Pope*, in an *Oath*. But the Men to bide upon are those of Conscience, who, the *King* may be sure, will always be true to Him, for this convincing Reason, because they will not Swear they ought.

The next time he talks of the *King* and *Council*, he would do well to remember, that he speaks of the Wisest, to say nothing of their Dignity, and most impartial Men of a great, and no stupid Nation. Who has a mind to impose upon them, should bethink himself of

ſomething more refined, than to ſay the *King* cannot expect his Subjects will obey Him, where they think, and ſwear they ought, becauſe they obey not the *Pope*, where they think they ought not. Why? they diſobey the *Pope* only, becauſe they fear to diſobey the *King*; and *God*, who has commanded us to obey Him. To make that a ground to ſuſpect their Obedience, is certainly the moſt pleaſantly odd, among all the Fantaſtical Whimſies of cauſeleſs Jealouſy.

I muſt not forget the Imputation of *Blackburnism*, it is ſo heynous a matter. *Schiſm* and *Hereſie*, Unconſciencious and Irreligious, without *Blackburnism*, had been nothing. He would have then the Loyalty of the *Oath-men* ſuſpected, becauſe ſome Sticklers for the *Oath*, admired *Blacklo*, and *Blacklo* taught Diſloya' Doctrine. 'Tis well this ſuſpicious *Gentleman* liv'd not in the Days of St. *Cyprian*, or St. *Hierom*, to ſuſpect them of *Hereſy*, becauſe they admired *Origen*. If *Blacklo* taught Diſloyalty, what would he have more of any body, than to leave him, and his Diſloyalty to themſelves; keep clear from the Infection, and preſerve their Loyalty ſound and untainted? And what better Proof would he have that they do this, than binding themſelves in the ſtrongeſt Bonds, of which humane Nature is capable, and endeavouring every body may do ſo too. He may as well ſuſpect the Silver, which bears the *Tower* mark, as the Loyalty which has been toucht by the Stone appointed by the Wiſdom of the Nation. If other Folks ſhould take example by him, and be ſuſpicious too, what better Evidence can he bring of his own Loyalty? When he brings as much, his Suſpicion will be more ſeaſonable; though 'twill ſhew but odly ſtill, without a better ground, than admiring *Blacklo*. If they admire him for Diſloyal Doctrine, if they abet him in it, 'tis ſomething. But as long as they love Loyalty better then *Blacklo*, and ſtick to it, whatever he or any body ſays, they may admire till their Hearts ake, and be never the leſs Loyal. They admire *Bellarmin*, as well as *Blacklo*, but will not be Diſloyal for either of their ſakes. Make admiring *Blacklo* a ground of ſuſpicion once, and there is not perhaps a knowing Man in the Nation to be truſted. As one may admire an Enemy; every Body, even of thoſe who were moſt violent againſt *Blacklo*, thought him, for all that, a learned Man, (for that is the *Engliſh* of Admiring) this Gentleman I believe himſelf for company. Does he therefore think it juſt the Suſpicion of Diſloyalty, and abetting the bad Doctrine he mentions, ſhould fall on himſelf, who yet cannot think worſe of it, than the *Oath-men*. While there is not a Man on either ſide, who

holds

holds that Doctrine, methinks we might be Friends for that matter Let the *Blackloist* be as bad as he will, the *Oath-man* is an honest Man. We think him not so bad, that one cannot be seen in his Company without Scandal, and find it more reasonable to think well of him for the *Oath* sake, than ill of the Oath for his. However it be, let him shift as he can for himself; our Business is with the *Oath*, not *Blackloism*.

But after all, is it as this *Gentleman* says? For I know not how, with his Jealousie and Suspitions, he has put me into the distrustful Humour too. *Blacklo*, he says, taught, *That we are bound to oppose a Banisht Prince, disputing with an Usurper, to fight against, and Murther him.* Why, there is as much Ignorance, as Disloyalty, in this. He must be as much a Fool, as a Knave, who tells us, a Prince loses his Right, by losing a Battle. A Learned Man to teach this! People notwithstanding to admire his Learning, and his Integrity! Those who were bred up in so Disloyal a School, to prove Loyal, and Sticklers for Loyalty! This Tale does not tell. And I have nothing, but his Word for it; which, it may be, would have gone further, if he had not written. By his good favour, I mean to suspend my Judgment, till I can light on *Blackloes* Book. For 'tis but Justice, to hear both sides.

The Truth is, There are Bayses in all Trades. *Blackloism* is one of the words they have got to express their *no meaning* by; a Twin to *Jansenism* in *France*, and *Popery* in *England*. No Signification belongs to any of the Three, but the Bayses use them, when they find a Man not for their turn, and have a mind to run him down, and nothing to alledge against him; For when they *have*, you never hear of these things. But when a Man gives no price, they cry out a *Jansenist*, or a *Blackloist* on him, who perhaps knows nothing of *Jansenius* or *Blacklo*; and *Papist* on him, who is at defiance with the *Pope*. By which they would have you apprehend some very bad thing, but which is not any one. A certain Sin, which is neither Pride nor Gluttony, nor any other; a Colour neither Black, nor Blew, nor Green; and so of all. Ask what this bad thing is, and wherein its particular Badness consists, and you spoyl all; you shall find either nothing at all, or nothing bad. As here; Admiring is no fault, at least, though there had been no cause, no great one: Holding Seditious Doctrine, is indeed a great Fault; but 'tis not committed. In a word, these Imputations are a sort of very bad Nothings. But yet they are convenient, because they may be in at every thing. Now, the

Oath is naught, becauſe *Blackloiſts* are for it; another time *Blackloiſts* ſhall be naught, becauſe they are for the *Oath*. The Trick will grow ſtale in time, and then every body will ſee what it is; and as ſoon as they hear of a *Janſeniſt*, a *Blackloiſt*, or *Papiſt*, conceive preſently it will, without a handſome Why. You may be ſure, that ſo it always is; as ſure as that the *Proteſtant Papiſt* is not the worſt Proteſtant in the Nation; nor all Reprobates, who think not ill of *Janſenius* or *Blacklo*. And this I ſay not for any of their ſakes, for I will not have to do with their Quarrels; but to ſhew what Arguments we have againſt the *Oath*. But the Pun of *Black Doctrine* was too ſmart to be loſt, and ſo the Argument could not be ſpared.

I have now done with this *Gentleman*, and would fain hope the Difference of our Sentiments will not hinder me from obtaining a reaſonable Requeſt at his, and his Fellow Writers hands. 'Tis, That when they write next, they would conſider a little more deeply, what they are doing, and what it is to ſet up for Maſters and Guides. It is indeed a Charitable Office, of great both Praiſe and Merit; but it had need be well diſcharged. The Day will come, when an Account will be taken of it; where all the Acts, which ſerve in this World to ſupport an ill grounded credit, and keep a Man from Shame, will go for nothing: Where there is no regard to a Magiſterial out-ſide; no minding who is decry'd, or cry'd up, nor by whom. Where the Grave look with a demurely confident Air, the Perſwaſive ſhrug, and Face of ſcornful pity, will not paſs for Arguments. Where nothing, in fine, will do it, but a clear Conſcience. Far be it from me, to Queſtion the Purity of any one; much farther to aſperſe it. I only intreat every one, for their own ſakes, to look to it, as the Concern requires, and ſee that all be right within. To ask themſelves whither there be nothing in their Eye but Truth, nothing in their Heart but the love of it? No proſpect of advantage or diſadvantage ſome way, no Friend to pleaſe, or fear to diſpleaſe? Whether they are themſelves throughly perſwaded, of what they would perſwade others, and if they be, by what? Whether not as much or more by ſuch motives, then any thing elſe? and whether their greateſt reaſon be not, becauſe they think it reaſonable to do as they are bid? Every one has a Faithful Friend in his boſome, who will anſwer truly to theſe and the like Queſtions, and they are not their own Friends who ask them not. Our Souls are at Stake, and the credit of Religion. For what a prejudice, what a Scandal to a

Religion.

Religion, to forbid those who are of it to profess their Allegiance, which to pay they are bound even by their Religion? Truth indeed is no just cause of Scandal; but they had need be very sure they say true, who say we may not profess our Allegiance, as he thinks fit we should, to whom we owe it. I cannot tell what to think, when I hear an honest Man say; I know not why it should be thus, and am sorry it is, but I am under Obedience; Time was, I told you, the *Oath* was lawful, and betwixt you and me, I think so still; but my Superiors are wiser then I; I must not say so now. I wish all be well; but think it strange Language for good and Learned Men. Obedience is a vertue; what makes us speak otherwise then we think, or think otherwise then reason directs, can be none. Because my Superior Commands me to take this or that side, must I therefore delude those who rely on me? They come not to ask what my Superior thinks or Commands, but what I think my self; and I must give them his Judgment instead of my own, and say, not what I would if I were at Liberty, but what he thinks fit I should; He who perhaps understands not the business so well as I (for 'tis not Learning always which makes a Superior) or if he do, has the concern of his Order to look to as well as Truth, with all my Heart I Love and Honour the Obedience, which assists us to keep the Commands of *God*: But if any pretend to Oblige us to violate Truth and Sincerity, with all my Heart I pray for my self to be preserv'd from it, and for others, that it may be taken for an excuse when time comes. 'Twill prove but a sorry one, I doubt, even for those who can alledge it. What will become of the rest? and what will they have to say for their busy earnestness, their heat and their crys? 'Tis every Days talk; such a one is for the *Oath*; who would have thought it of him? I am sorry he has lost himself so; I wish him well; Pity he gives such bad Example. You who talk thus, do you know any thing of the matter? Can you Judge of the differences among Schollers? Does not your own Heart tell you, you have no reason for all this, but that some body said so; perhaps, no more knowing then your self; perhaps, in whom Obedience spoke more then Knowledge. Be sincere, if you please, tell the Story as it is; say, that some Body told you so; and let that Some-body answer for it. But make not your self responsible, for causing your Neighbour to be ill thought of, who if he do amiss, 'tis more than you can tell.

Who are, indeed, perswaded the Truth is of their Side, should me-thinks have a good Reason in store, why they are so perswaded, and

and bring it out when 'tis call'd for, or they voluntarily undertake to perſwade others. Something of more Appearance, at leaſt, than what we find here, and generally elſewhere. It ſhould not ſuppoſe the Queſtion, inſtead of proving it. As here, where the Queſtion is, Whether we are bound to obey theſe *Breves* of the *Pope*, or no; and the proof, we are bound to obey our Supream Paſtor, in things appertaining to Faith and Salvation? As for ſuppoſing, that ours are ſuch matters, let that paſs: To ask, whether we are to obey the *Breves*; is it to ask, whether we are to obey in the Matters Commanded by the *Breves*; that is in the Matters of Faith and Salvation, if they be ſo. Again, becauſe the ſame Man may be a Superior in one Matter, or one Reſpect; and Inferior in another, to ask, whether a Superior may be diſobey'd, is to ask whether he may be diſobey'd in Matters wherein he is a Superior. For in what he is not, Obedience cannot be due to him. The *Pope* now being a Superior in Matters of Faith and Salvation, to ask whether he may be diſobey'd, is to ask whether he may be diſobey'd in ſuch Matters. When for Proof then, that we muſt obey in ſuch Matters, we are told we muſt obey in ſuch Matters; we have no more, but barely the thing ſuppoſed, of which we inquire; no more than juſt, we muſt becauſe becauſe we muſt.

Some Honeſty too would do well in a Reaſon, as well as a Servant. Diſputes thrive as ill as Families, when we employ unfaithful Agents, and who are not true to the Cauſe; Mercinary Gentlemen, ready to take pay on the other ſide, as ſoon as they can get Entertainment. What He employs, to ſet us ill with the *King*, we thank him; would fly in his Face, and do as much to ſet him ill with the *Pope*, barely forbidding. 'Tis but putting, by the Rule of Tranſpoſition, Spiritual for Temporal, and ſaying to the *Pope*: Promiſe your ſelf no Obedience from one that diſobeys his own Prince, in a Matter moſt belonging to a Prince, Allegiance; He will never be true to You in Spirituals, who fails his own Prince in Temporals. Flouriſh this a little after his Copy, with *Gods* Vicegerent, whom we are to obey, *not only for Wrath, but Conſcience*; who is ſet over us for praiſe of the Good, and Terrour of the Bad; who bears not the Sword in vain, *&c.* And the Auxiliary is as trim, and as ſtout againſt Him and Us. Set him upon doing you the ſame ill Office with the *King*, which you would do us, and he is for you there too. 'Tis eaſily ſaid, ſuch a one diſobeys in one thing, truſt him not in another. Such Arguments are a kind *Bravos*, in the Common-wealth of Learning;

as

as ready, and as willing for their hire to cut his Throat, who bid them kill, as his whom they kill'd. And the Miſchief is they are always at hand; no body can miſs one, who will look for him. But then then they are not fatal. One may live, when they have done their worſt.

The Reaſon too, in fair dealing, which you would have mine, ſhould be yours. Pretences will never be wanting; but a Reaſon and a Pretence, are two things. He who after what he brings for a Reaſon is found faulty, continues as much fixt to his Tenet as before, has I am ſure ſomething elſe to fix him, and only trys an experiment: Which where it ſucceeds there is ſo much got; where it fails, 'tis but a Syllogiſm loſt. Let us have *bona fide*-doings; the Concern deſerves it. Propoſe to us, if you would have us of the mind, the very Motive which makes you be of it, that for which you indeed think the Doctrine true, and which if it held not, you will be content to acknowledge Reaſon is not on the ſide. The Depoſing Power, and the Heretical were more *A-la-mode* at firſt; Diſobedience and Treaſon are moſt talkt of now. Chuſe of theſe, if theſe be the true Reaſons, or any other which you think the ſtrongeſt, that on which you rely your ſelf. Some convincing Reaſon you have, or you are either not convinc'd, or not rationally: And One will do it, as well as a Hundred. Pitch upon the One, which you think will do; but ſtand by it; and as it proves, ſo let the Cauſe go. To ſtart *now* one thing, *then* another, and another, and back again, and over and over again, is to ſay: I muſt make a Shew; you ſhall take theſe for the Reaſons, if you pleaſe, which likes you beſt: I'le not be bound up by any of them. What Reaſon I have for my ſelf, is another matter: Theſe are what I thought moſt convenient to offer to you. In ſhort, If you do not produce the true Reaſon, all you ſay is pure Pretence; and till we can hear of ſomething, of which you will ſay, Theſe ſhall end it, anſwer me this and I have done: How can we think we have the true Reaſon, any more than Colour, to maintain the Side without loſing the Credit? But which you maintain not for its ſake, nor value more perhaps than other Folks.

Dally thus a while longer, and People will be apt to ſuſpect 'tis Intreague all, and pure Cabal. So many Schollars, as are now leaug'd againſt the *Oath*, to agree in this point of Schollarſhip; upon pure Conviction of Reaſon, whom no Reaſon, yet invented by Man, could ever bring to agree in any other: Faith and Authority left by *Chriſt*, in every bodies Mouth, and your Writings acknowledging that the

point

point belongs not to Faith, and you Hearers bearing you Witneſs, that all the Authority in Queſtion, is an Authority to ſettle a Doctrine never taught by *Chriſt*; and beſides, with your good Favours, falſe and prejudicial both to Government and Religion: Cauſe ſhewn, why your claim ſhould be over-ruled, that Cauſe ſuppreſt, and the claim as confidently urged, as if there were nothing againſt it: Theſe and the like ſound ſuſpiciouſly. Then we ſee the ſide you take, pleaſes where theſe, on whom you depend, live and deſire to pleaſe; As who has pretences in a Court, muſt needs ſtrive to be well with the Prince. It pleaſes there, if that be to purpoſe; becauſe 'tis thought true, and beneficial to the World, as a bridle to Vice. And 'tis thought true, becauſe in a Nation, where *Tramontano* is but another word for Fool, nothing is valued in compariſon of their own Divines, and they unluckily happen to be in the wrong. However it be, we ſee your Superiours have Influence on you, and the *Pope* on them. We ſee this Influence may combine you more then Reaſon, perhaps can, at leaſt does, if that be your Reaſon which you offer us. For that may be ſeen through, without Spectacles. Though this ſhould work with you, we ſee you have no great Reaſon to propoſe it to us; becauſe we ſhould perhaps not think a thing the truer or falſer, for being more or leſs agreeable to your Intereſts. Whether it does or no, your own Hearts can beſt tell; into which I take not upon me to enter. But as we live in a miſtruſtful Age, let not the Suſpicion take root, if I may adviſe you. Zealous we, who think we do mighty Matters for Faith, and the Authority of *Chriſt*'s Vicar, by doing all we can againſt the *Oath*, may come to ſay one day; What, am I with my Zeal, and buſie Concern, only ſerving all the while, it may be the Intereſt, it may be the Paſſion of other Men? Labouring that the Divines of *Rome* may get the better, and paſs for abler Men in the World, than the Divines of *France*? That ſome Body may be better look't on at *Rome*, than ſome Body, and ſtand fairer for Pretences? That there be Examples of the Deſert of ſome Members, to attone for Diſtaſte taken at others? Muſt I be his Implement, who thinks he has found the Secret of maintaining the Depoſing Power, without appearing for it, the Addreſs to get the Merit, and decline the Envy? I, who believe it not my ſelf, as thoſe very few among the Laity, even of thoſe who refuſe the *Oath*, who do? Muſt I think there are no good Chriſtians, but thoſe who believe *Chriſt* has left a Power to eſtabliſh falſe Doctrine, and obey it when it does? When it comes to this, you muſt come out with your true Reaſon;

and

and that Reaſon be ſuch, as will ſatisfie a Reaſonable Man. 'Tis ill putting off things to the laſt; you had as good do it now. VII

And ſo the *Reader* is quit of me. However he finds my Diſcourſe, I hope he will not find my Pretenſions unreaſonable. No Body would be the worſe, who ſhould grant me all I deſire; that the Love of Truth may be as much in our Hearts, as Mouths; and that, as we are aware, 'tis ſhameful not to ſay, I am concern'd for nothing elſe, and I have her on my ſide; we would remember, 'tis a great deal more ſhameful not to ſay ſo ſincerely. You who ſay you have the Truth, have ſome Marks ſure, by which you know her. By which of any yet aſſigned, can any body elſe know the *Oath* is naught? By *Prieſtly Treaſon?* Why then was the *Oath* oppoſed, when that was never thought of? By *Depoſing Power*? Why then is it oppoſed ſtill, when that is waved? Can either be the Cauſe of a Feavor; which abates not, when they are removed? No one can perhaps be pitch'd upon, of which it will not be ſaid, the *Oath* might do well enough, if that were all. But this is the Buſineſs, ſays one; that, ſays another: Bidding fair to make other Folks think, that oppoſing the *Oath*, in which they all agree, is the only buſineſs of all, beſides having ſomething to ſay. And this ſomething every Body ſees; but whether any Body, beſides themſelves, ſees the very motive they have to oppoſe the *Oath*, is a Doubt, which I think they would Oblige the World to reſolve. Then, How many are eager againſt the *Oath*, who never ſaw it, or if they did by Chance, or Curioſity, will not examine it, nor hearken to any thing alledged for it. Never ſo little Scrupuloſity, would make them ſhy to hazard injuring their Neighbour, and their Prince; having a hand in propagating falſe and pernicious Doctrine, ſcandalling Religion, &c. And yet their Zeal may be doing this all the while, for ought they can tell. Though there were no other World, and no Account to be made in it, methinks it ſhews altogether as handſome in this, to talk of what they do underſtand, as to refuſe to underſtand what they will talk of. Why People ſhould diſtruſt themſelves, I know not. There is no Witchery in this buſineſs. But who will not, or think they cannot underſtand it, can let it alone, if they pleaſe. To ſay, I am ſure the *Oath* is a very bad thing, and they very bad Men who are for it, but I do and will know nothing of either, ſeems to me a Tale which may be left untold, without prejudice to any Body. In fine, I am unreaſonable enough, to wiſh with all my Heart, that no ſuſpicion may

remain of ungrounded Animosity, and blind Earnestness, of Partiality or Prejudice, that there may be an End made of a vexatious Dispute, and ways taken, by which we may at last hope to come to it. And I am uncharitable enough, to seduce others, if I can, into the same irrational and uncharitable Perswasions. For the rest, some I believe will think I have said *too much*, and some *too little*. As indeed an *Answer* would have askt *more*, and *fewer* Examples perhaps have serv'd. I intreat the *One* to remember I disclaim'd Answering at first, and the *Other*, that t'other Argument tempts like t'other Bottle. While so much remains equally provoking and easy, I for my part think it something to break off where I do.

FINIS.